Nova Scotia
Advisory Council on
the Status of Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

A POLITICAL GUIDEBOOK

THIRD EDITION

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Editors: Annabel Bruce, Diane MacGregor

Graphic designer: Margaret Issenman

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Acknowledgement

Many women have contributed to this publication – elected women, formerly elected women, unelected women, and soon-to-be-elected women. They all share the hope that more women will participate in the political process. They share the belief that greater participation of women in the political process will improve the lives of all Nova Scotians. They also share the belief that greater participation of women will improve the way politics is conducted in our society. Thank you all.

A special thank you to Marie Crooker, whose dedication to this cause brought the first edition of this booklet into being. Marie was an Advisory Council member for the South Shore from 1987–91. She spent a lifetime volunteering for transition houses, shelters, food banks, hospital boards, and school boards. She was also active in politics and campaigned for human rights.

The key, she believed, was to get women directly and equally involved in the decision-making process at the highest level. She hoped this guidebook would bring us one step closer to that goal.

Foreword

The Advisory Council on the Status of Women has prepared this guide to help women in Nova Scotia who are interested in politics.

- We hope it encourages you to become actively involved as a representative or candidate at the community, municipal, provincial, or federal level.
- We hope it gives you suggestions and ideas that you can apply to your area of interest within your community.
- We hope it inspires more Nova Scotia women to lend their voice to public service.
- We encourage you to visit our website at **www.gov.ns.ca/staw/politicalwomen.htm** for up-to-date, statistical information on the political participation of women in Nova Scotia and throughout Canada.

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Most people working towards bettering communities, raising money in rural Nova Scotia, are women. They have to be very creative and diligent to keep organizations going. That's a skill needed in politics.

Ruth Allen

1979 elected to Cumberland District School Board and then became the first female chair of the Cumberland School Board;
1982 elected Cumberland County Councillor;
1989 elected as first female warden of Cumberland County and served two terms.

Every individual brings their voice to the table, but a woman brings a different perspective and way of doing things than men.

I think everyone believes they can make a difference, but decision-making means listening to other views. Teamwork is very important and it takes a long time to make change. It is important in politics that what you say and what you do is right the first time.

Muriel "Fluff" Bailie

Former MLA, Pictou West, elected 1999

It may be more difficult as a woman to become involved in a political area while trying to raise a family, but it is possible and very rewarding. We need a cross-section of age, gender, and minority groups across all levels of government to represent our electors to the best of our ability.

Women need to step up to the plate and realize in their own minds that they are equal. There are opportunities galore out there. Follow your dreams – they are accessible through hard work, commitment, and believing in one's self.

Carolyn Bolivar-Getson

MLA, Lunenburg West, Cabinet Minister,
elected 2003, 2006

It was awkward as the first woman elected to an all-male council until my colleagues discovered there was credibility there.

Women often downplay their assets when considering public life, but they should remember there are connections outside the business community. All women have certain skills whether it is as a volunteer on the PTA or some community committee. These are relevant skills and anyone who wants an active role or wants to participate or see something happen in their community should pursue it. Either run for office or, at the very least, vote.

Sheila Fougere

HRM Councillor, Connaught-Quinpool, District 14,
first woman elected to HRM Council in 1998
by-election, elected in 2000

For any woman who is still raising a family, politics is very difficult and adapting the family to political life is very difficult. Weekends are as busy as weekdays and the family has to be prepared to jump in and support the candidate.

Sandy Jolly

Former MLA, Dartmouth North, Cabinet Minister, elected 1988

It's a hard world, a hard life, politics, and what women see of politics in the House of Commons goes against their more consensus-building approach. It is unpleasant, adversarial, and unseemly. That image does nothing to encourage women to run. The image of the political sphere has to change.

I went into politics because of my interest in social justice, disability, and the arts. It is women who ask the questions about pay equity, health care, child poverty, and disability.

Wendy Lill

Former MP, elected 1997 Dartmouth

Politics is the hardest, most challenging, most rewarding experience I've had. I only wish there were more women. Until there is a critical mass of women, the blood-sport culture will not change.

Maureen MacDonald

MLA, Halifax Needham, elected 1998, 1999, 2003, 2006

Politics is not a 9 to 5 job. There is no such thing as "regular" hours and that makes it tough on family life.

Anyone who feels they have something to contribute, something to add, should not hesitate to enter political life at whatever level best suits them. Dedication and commitment is the key.

Mary Anne MacGrath

Former MLA, Halifax Bedford Basin, elected 1999

Decision-making is always improved by involving those impacted by the decisions. Women are a significant part of our society and must bring their experience, talents, perspectives, priorities, and approaches to the political process. Politics is about how decisions get made – whether in the family, neighbourhood, school, church, organization, advisory committee, elected public office, etc. Women need to voice their concerns in places where action can be taken to improve life for those we care about and all those we haven't met yet.

Marilyn More

MLA, Dartmouth South–Portland Valley, elected 2003, 2006

If women have the time and the ability they should get involved whether it is the school board, ABCs, or as MLA. The thing I have learned that I didn't know is how important it is to have ordinary people. If you left the running of society to the machine of government it would be a living hell. You need the touches of ordinary people or you'd just end up with systems and no room for humanity.

Jane Purves

Former MLA, Halifax-Citadel, Cabinet Minister, elected 1999

As a novice, the more I became involved in the election process, the more I understood why our political system has been predominantly male.

The political process is open to ideas, yet as a stay-at-home mother, it's hard to get ideas on the public agenda. But women, as women, have a perspective that needs to be expressed, and the legislature is a much better place to do so than I would ever have believed.

Michelle Raymond

MLA, Halifax-Atlantic, elected 2003

There is never a dull moment, especially in such a diverse district like mine. You always have to expect the unexpected.

A true sense of community can shine through at times.

Dawn Sloane

Councillor, HRM District 12, Halifax-Downtown

The adversarial nature of party politics was a concern for me as a new MLA, and I believe it can discourage women from getting involved. I was used to a polite and businesslike municipal council. Entering the provincial arena was a culture shock. That being said, there are tremendous opportunities to help the people we represent and to work with community groups. These activities on the local level are what politics should be about and that is where I believe we can be most effective as elected representatives.

From my experience, the positive aspects of political involvement far outweigh the negative. I encourage other women to get involved.

Diana Whalen

Former Councillor HRM Clayton Park West–Rockingham–Prince's Lodge (District 16), MLA, Halifax–Clayton Park, elected 2003, 2006

So far this has been an incredible journey. The workload at times can be challenging, and I get frustrated by the amount of energy that goes into the political gaming. That energy could be better used to get things done more efficiently.

I encourage women to seriously consider a role in politics. We need more of our voices heard around the tables where important decisions are made that affect us. There are many rewards, such as standing up and advocating for those who cannot, and putting forward ideas and solutions on important issues that face us today.

Vicki Conrad

MLA, Queens, elected 2006

Introduction

Nova Scotia women want to run for public office. They want to be councillors and mayors and MLAs and MPs. Some even dream of becoming premier and prime minister. How do we know? We asked them. At a conference on Women in Politics held in 1990 at Mount Saint Vincent University, we talked with them. Women want political involvement at all three levels of government, with all three mainstream political parties. That conference was followed by regional workshops throughout Nova Scotia, once again confirming women have the interest. So why doesn't that interest translate into candidates, votes, and seats? How do we translate interest into election victories?

Votes for Women was first produced by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women in 1991 as a resource to Nova Scotia women looking for practical information on entering the political arena. Although over a decade has passed, the percentage of Nova Scotia women elected to provincial and federal office remains low compared to the rest of Canada. In the Nova Scotia provincial legislature, women make up just over 19 per cent of elected MLAs. Since this guidebook was first published, new political parties have been formed at the federal level and the national political landscape has changed dramatically, but female representation has not.

In addition, voter turn out for elections has dropped significantly at all levels of government, leading one to conclude that a lack of interest, lost faith, or general malaise with the political process is growing in Canada. This represents a challenge for all those entering politics, including women.

At the same time, formal political activity for women in Nova Scotia is still fraught with obstacles and, in many cases, limited to traditional behind-the-scenes activities such as calling meetings, providing refreshments, working in the office, and canvassing voters. For the most part, women remain isolated and excluded from decision-making roles and uninvolved in the fund-raising elements within parties and campaigns, further distancing them from opportunities to bring about real and significant changes.

Political parties have not overcome structural barriers – including systemic discrimination and lack of financial resources or support systems for women as candidates – to the extent necessary to have women elected in numbers that reflect the population. At all levels women continue to make up a small minority of politicians even though their interest and desire to seek office remain strong.

Workshops conducted throughout the province from 2002 to 2007 confirm that women in rural and urban areas are strongly committed to community, municipal, provincial, and federal politics and want to increase their involvement in the future.

While women are not equal players in the political arena, it is vital that more women become directly involved in the process of governance and that votes for women translate to voices for women. It is to this end that the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women has renewed its commitment to provide resources to women interested in the political process through workshops and through *Votes for Women: A Political Guidebook for Nova Scotia Women, 3rd edition.*

Assessing Your Strengths

The decision to enter public life is a highly personal one, based very much on your personal circumstances. Do not dismiss the importance of your current job, your family, your finances, and your personal life. Weigh them heavily against your interest, ability, and commitment to contribute to public life.

On the other hand, don't underestimate what you have to offer. Women have been socialized to underestimate their abilities and strengths and have been conditioned to dismiss many of their skills as being irrelevant to the traditional "male" role of political activity. It is important to overcome this conditioning and to provide an honest inventory of what you may bring to the public arena.

Very often this job can be made easier with the help of a trusted confidante or mentor, or a candid friend who can be objective. Seek, too, the advice of current and former female politicians. Many are very willing to give advice and direction to potential newcomers. In many cases this mentoring crosses political party lines – political women are likely to share their experience with other interested women regardless of their individual political persuasion.

A few key guidelines

- You must be ready to make the commitment. Do not let anyone, or any political party, talk you into seeking office if you are not ready to make the commitment or if you feel you are not ready. Political parties have been known to encourage women to seek election in unwinnable ridings just to increase the number of female candidates they have on the ballot. Take care that this does not happen to you.

- You must promote your values and goals to electors. This is key to a successful campaign. To that end, you must be prepared to aggressively and publicly outline your assets and downplay your shortcomings.

- You must have a good media campaign that reflects your objectives as well as your image. If you are squeamish about publicity, get professional media training. You can't win if you can't face the cameras.

- You must have a plan to deal with any embarrassing issues that may come to light. Most people will have something from their past that they would rather forget about. But in public life, such things don't stay forgotten. Develop a strategy to deal with such issues in an honest and open way that balances your privacy, the public's right to know, and your opportunity to succeed in an election. Seek the advice of a trusted mentor on the more personal and difficult issues.

The following self-appraisal exercise is simply a guideline. There may be many other considerations that you and your friends and family may wish to assess about your personal situation. Once complete, share the results with your mentor to ensure you have not overlooked experience, skill, and competencies that you already have.

Self-Assessment Exercise

ate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being weak and 5 being strong.

	WEAK				STRONG
Patience Level	1	2	3	4	5

Reporters and constituents may ask you inappropriate questions. You may be asked the same question many times. Can you remain calm when dealing with people on a regular basis whom you find annoying or frustrating?

	WEAK				STRONG
Leadership Skills	1	2	3	4	5

Do you like working with people? Do people trust you and confide in you? Are you able to listen empathetically to someone else's problems or concerns? Are you able to delegate responsibility effectively and to openly demonstrate your appreciation for the hard work and loyalty of your supporters? Do you have access to individuals and groups who would work for your campaign?

	WEAK				STRONG
Public Speaking	1	2	3	4	5

Can you speak easily in front of diverse groups and to the media? Are you articulate? Does it take you a long time to practice a speech before you feel comfortable, or do you need only to read it once or twice to ensure you remember the salient points? Are you able to handle unanticipated questions effectively?

	WEAK				STRONG
Stress Management Skills	1	2	3	4	5

Can you set priorities and follow them? Can you deal with the highs and lows of your campaign with a fairly even temperament? Are you able to do many different tasks at once, or are you easily overwhelmed by disorganization and confusion? Would you be able to keep your campaign running smoothly?

	WEAK				STRONG
Stamina/Endurance	1	2	3	4	5

Are you able to work long hours under stressful conditions? Can you pace yourself? Are you able to travel well and schedule your activities so you don't burn out? Are you able to stop and say no before you become completely exhausted?

	WEAK				STRONG
Impact on Personal Life	1	2	3	4	5

Does your family support the idea of your getting involved in politics? Can you modify or take a leave from your work/ volunteer/ family commitments during the campaign? Do you have a network of friends who can offer you moral support? Could you, when necessary, put the needs of your constituents ahead of your own?

	WEAK				STRONG
Political Know-How	1	2	3	4	5

Do you know how government works? Do you have adequate knowledge and understanding of the issues? Do you know how to play the "game" of politics, such as when to say how much? Do you know what resources are available to help you become informed?

	WEAK				STRONG
EXPERIENCE	1	2	3	4	5

Have you served on agencies, boards, or commissions? Have you served on volunteer committees in your community? If you are involved in partisan politics, were you active in the party before seeking the nomination? Have you ever been actively involved in working for another candidate's campaign?

Add other items, positive and negative, that pertain to your situation and that could affect your decision to run for public office.

Many women tend to downplay their skills and experience and, as a result, you may have rated yourself poorly in this exercise. Make sure someone else checks your results. Keep in mind that many of the skills you may be lacking can be learned and acquired.

In general, women have a negative view of politics and political life. Research shows that women are more likely than men to view politics as a "dirty game," requiring ruthless competition and aggression. Historically, of course, politics have been male dominated. Our societal expectations exclude women from the game. These perceptions won't change until the culture of politics changes. And the only way to change that culture is from within. Women must stand for office – and get elected in representative numbers – if we want our governments to more broadly reflect our society and our values.

Contrary to popular belief, most people get involved in politics to contribute to society, not for personal gain. Compensation for municipal, provincial, and federal office is far below remuneration in the public and private sectors for positions with similar responsibilities, hours of work, travel, and so forth. As a matter of fact, in some municipalities and school boards, representatives are offered only a stipend or honorarium for the work they do. Before considering a political career, be sure to investigate the compensation factor by checking with the appropriate office. Be aware, too, that rules of disclosure under conflict of interest guidelines apply to political life at the provincial and federal levels and within some municipalities. These you must thoroughly understand and follow.

You should also consider how your decision to serve would affect your family and personal life. What sacrifices will you have to make? How do they measure up against what you hope to achieve? Do you think your community needs more senior centres, teen centres, parks, schools, or other amenities? Do you have concerns about violence against women, health care, the environment, education, or unemployment? Do you have ideas to address your concerns? Are you satisfied with your current representative?

Most people have definite, but broad, ideas about the way things should be done and how government should respond. The process of seeking a nomination and becoming a candidate requires that you more finely hone and define your ideas and develop a political agenda. What is your agenda? Are you for keeping things the same? Reforming some particular facet of society? Bringing about broad social change? Know your own mind and how you hope to contribute to the political arena.

Whatever your agenda, the public and, in particular, the media, will expect you to be knowledgeable on a variety of issues. They will judge you based on your awareness of the issues affecting your community, but it is important to remain focused on three or four issues you care deeply about. These issues will comprise your platform and will set you apart from your opponents. Ensure your issues are consistent and compatible with your agenda.

Voters will support the candidate who most consistently and clearly articulates their views. Take every opportunity to repeat your views on the issues and, when all else fails, repeat them again.

You may already know the benefits and shortcomings of the public education system, for example, but you will not know everything about all the issues to which you will be required to respond. While you may not be able to anticipate every question, you can become aware of the issues important to your community before and during the campaign.

Once again, the importance of a mentor and "spheres of influence" become crucial to raising your awareness of the issues. These spheres of influence are people within the community with a level of knowledge or expertise that you can identify and learn from. They can educate you on a particular issue and, with that awareness, you can build and define your own position and build your position into your platform.

Subscribing to your local community, provincial, and national papers is a must. Many of these resources are readily available on the Internet. Whatever level of elected office you choose, keep informed and current on issues in your county, your province, and your country. You never know what issue may become relevant to your constituents. Scan the headlines, clip relevant articles, and make sure a member of your team is tracking how current issues affect the local community. If you are running municipally, concentrate on the local media, provincially, the provincial media, federally, the national media.

Public meetings are also a critical source for information. If you can't attend them all, send a representative and gather all relevant materials, reports, briefs, and presentations. Take notes for future reference. Again, go to the "spheres of influence" in the community who have rallied around a particular issue and learn first-hand about their concerns and ideas. You will gain not only awareness of the issue, but also the trust of those who see you responding to their concerns by attending their meetings and listening to their viewpoint.

Get a feel for the community landscape by identifying groups and individuals who have researched particular issues. Gather information from them. They can lead you to other organizations with different ideas. Once again, the Internet is a useful resource as well as the local library. Gather information from all sides of the issue, not just the one with which you agree.

Jurisdiction and Duties

The level of politics you choose to enter will have to do with your interests. Look back over your important issues to determine what level of government has jurisdiction over the areas you are most concerned about.

Political involvement at the municipal level usually requires less of your time (although not always) and little requirement to travel outside your area, but it usually provides no remuneration except a per diem, or daily allowance, for attending meetings (for councillors) or a yearly honorarium (for mayors and wardens). Since municipal amalgamation (HRM and CBRM), some mayors and councillors receive salary and travel expenses.

Provincial-level political involvement requires Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to be in Halifax during the periods the House is sitting – usually a fall and spring session, each two to four months long.

At the federal level, Members of Parliament must spend part of the year in Ottawa, usually Mondays through Thursdays when Parliament is sitting. You will need to maintain two residences and two offices, one in Ottawa and one in your riding.

Traditionally, women are more likely to run as candidates and be elected at the municipal level and less likely to run and be elected at the provincial and federal levels.

Municipal

Municipalities have jurisdiction (although not exclusively) over issues such as police protection, fire services, urban land use, housing, waste disposal, public transit, street maintenance, local industrial development, tourism, school systems, and nursing homes. Over the last decade the lines between municipal and provincial jurisdictions have blurred to some degree under Municipal Service Exchange and, in some cases, duplication still exists.

Municipalities are also involved in promoting their cities and towns as locations for economic development and encouraging the establishment of cultural and recreational programs. Municipal councils can contribute to day care, homeless and abused women's shelters, second-stage housing, improved police protection, improved procedures for abused women and sexual assault victims, and coordination of some social programs.

Political parties do not play a dominant role at this level, and the legislative bodies are generally small, involving a mayor, warden, and a varying number of councillors, depending on the size of the community. Some municipalities have expanded geographically and representationally due to amalgamation.

The main duty of municipal councillors is to attend council and committee meetings where decisions are made for the municipality. Some councils meet weekly, bi-weekly, or once a month, aside from committee meetings, and council members receive a per diem for attendance. Mayors and wardens are responsible for presiding over Council meetings and acting as spokespersons for the Council. Honoraria or salary for mayors vary considerably from municipality to municipality in Nova Scotia.

Provincial

The provincial government has jurisdiction over education, health care, housing, highways, resource management, energy, environment, labour, economic development, tourism, employment rights (such as parental leave and employment equity), social services, day care, consumer affairs, and human rights.

Duties of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) vary considerably depending on whether their party forms the government, whether they are given a Cabinet portfolio, or whether their party forms the official opposition or the third party. In opposition, members often carry critic responsibilities that shadow the Cabinet portfolios.

Spending time in the visitor's gallery when the House is sitting can be a very effective way of learning the role each member plays. In some areas, cable television channels carry the proceedings of the House when in session or the three days (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays) when Question Period is scheduled. Province House is located between Granville and Hollis Streets in Halifax. Identification is required to obtain a visitor's pass to enter Province House.

MLAs also must act as ombudsperson and advocate for the needs of their constituents and community.

Federal

The federal government has jurisdiction over external affairs, national defence, communications, energy, criminal law, and the administration of many other matters such as pensions and social security, employment insurance, employment and employment training programs, Aboriginal affairs, justice, and divorce law.

The duties of Members of Parliament (MPs) are similar to those of MLAs, except that jurisdictions and responsibilities are on a national level.

Many issues – such as education, housing, social services, and health care – involve all levels of government. Be sure you are knowledgeable on the interconnectedness of policy, programming, and funding in these issues at the three levels, as this can become very confusing. It is especially confusing and frustrating to constituents who simply want answers to their problems, whatever level of government you represent. For this reason it is important to develop positive relationships with colleagues at all levels of government so that resolving issues can be that much easier.

In addition to researching and visiting council, the legislature, or parliament, try to discuss the issues with a woman who holds elected office in the party or level of government that interests you. Perhaps she would spend an hour or so with you explaining her duties, the difficulties she faces, and the rewards of carrying out her duties. Many women already involved in politics are happy to have the opportunity to encourage other women to run for office.

The following table summarizes the eligibility requirements for candidates at the three levels of office. Please check the appropriate election act and amendments to ensure that the information is current at the time you are running.

Table 1 Qualifying as a Candidate

	Municipal	Provincial	Federal
Minimum age on polling day	18	18	18
Citizenship	Canadian	Canadian	Canadian
Residency in electoral district	Yes, 3 months in municipality	No, see act	No
Other requirements	Yes, see act	Yes, see act	Yes, see act
Deposit	$200 (max)	$100	$1,000
Number of nominators	At least 5 qualified voters	At least 5 qualified voters	100 or 50, see act
Appointment of official agent	Required, see act	Required	Required
Statement of party affiliation & confirmation	None	Required unless independent	Required
Nomination day	2nd Tuesday in September	Tuesday, 14 days before polling day	Monday, 21 days before polling day
Usual polling day	3rd Saturday in October	Tuesday	Monday
Campaign period	Approximately 8 weeks	Approximately 4.5 weeks	36 days minimum
Usual time between elections	4 years	4 years	4 years
Limits to campaign spending	None	Yes, see act	Yes, see act

Many women do not feel they are in a position to dedicate the time and effort required to seek office in the formal municipal, provincial, or federal arenas. Many others feel they require exposure to and experience with public service on a different scale before considering other options. Still others opt to delay their political aspirations to a point in life when family and career considerations are less demanding.

Whatever the reason, many options are available to women who wish to contribute to their community without running for political office. At the municipal level, there are many citizen committees, task forces, and advisory groups that serve around particular issues. At the provincial level there are numerous agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs) that are open to the public. Newspaper advertisements for openings on ABCs appear twice a year. Applications are accepted by the Executive Council office for consideration. Applicants are approved by the Human Resource Committee of the Nova Scotia Legislature on a regular basis. Visit the Executive Council's website for updated information on ABCs at **www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council.**

The Federal government also has a number of boards and agencies that require the participation of citizens with expertise in a variety of areas. Participation at the federal level may require travel to Ottawa or other areas of the country depending on the nature of the work of the board or agency. Contact your local MP or Senator for federal applications and appointments.

Working for a Party

You probably already have a sense of which political party most fits your own views on the role of government. Your voting decisions in the past were probably made by assessing the candidates as well as the parties they represented. If you do not know each party platform, call party or caucus offices and ask for their literature. Speak to a researcher or information officer for detailed information or access their website on the Internet. (See Appendix 1 for contact information.)

All three parties also welcome volunteers in a variety of roles, and you can learn more about what may be available by contacting either the party offices or the caucus offices. While volunteering may not fit with your goal of elected office, it is one way to become familiar with the party structure, platform, and various components of a campaign. All parties keep active websites at the provincial level with links to their caucus offices and federal counterparts.

Some political parties maintain active women's organizations that provide funding and other support to women entering politics at the provincial and federal levels. More on how to access this funding appears in Appendix 1.

Securing a Party Nomination

Often, securing a party nomination for a provincial or federal campaign is more difficult for women than winning an actual election. Internal party barriers, discrimination, and the still prevalent "old boys club" culture often prevail, making it harder for women to gain party support at the local level. At the same time, political parties often encourage women to run in unwinnable ridings for the sake of boosting their female candidate numbers.

While securing the party nomination is often the hardest step in succeeding to elected office, women who prevail in a contested nomination often win the election. If you have not already done so, officially join the party of your choice as a member. This is crucial and required before seeking party nomination. In addition, as a party member, you can introduce debate and pass resolutions for party policy, thus bringing forward issues of interest to you and to those you seek to represent. This can affect what your party will do to encourage more women to run for office.

Unless you intend to run without any political affiliation, you must go through a party's nomination process. The membership of a recognized party constituency officially nominates a person to represent the party in an election. Sometimes one individual is asked to run and secures the nomination by acclamation; at other times two or more people run and must compete with each other to become a party representative. At the constituency level in most parties, a search committee is struck to encourage prospective candidates to seek nominations.

A leadership campaign is run the same way as an election campaign, except the voters are the party membership rather than the public in your constituency.

Many of the barriers to women's greater involvement in political life are uncovered at the nomination level and are internal to the party. Often, for women candidates the most significant barrier to winning an election is securing a party nomination and subsequent support. Research suggests that men are more likely to secure nominations than women. However, obstacles within party structures are gradually being eliminated. Formal and informal policies are being devised (mainly by women) to increase the number of women working within party organizations and running as electoral candidates. It is important for parties themselves to take the steps to ensure equity within their organizations, as outside measures rarely prove effective.

Party service may be one of the most important factors that influences the selection of candidates in closely contested ridings. This can present another barrier to women who traditionally have done support work which is often overlooked and unrecognized as valuable service. This means that few women have had the opportunity to gain the kind of experience that would qualify them as a "desirable" candidate in the eyes of the dominant party membership.

Running as an Independent

Running without political affiliation is almost unknown in provincial or federal politics, although it is growing in popularity as people distance themselves from party structures. However, winning an election as an independent at the provincial and federal level would be both very difficult and very expensive. You would have no party funds or resources behind you. It is more common for an elected representative to leave a party while in office and sit as an independent, but they are rarely re-elected.

The reverse is true for municipal politics. Overt party affiliation would not usually provide an advantage. There are no party funds for candidates at this level.

Many people are uncomfortable having a formal affiliation with a political party and choose instead to pursue municipal office where parties do not have the role or influence they have at other levels of government. However, many elected at the municipal level move on to provincial or federal politics later in their careers. Political parties monitor municipal politicians with a view to encouraging them to seek provincial and federal nominations.

The earlier you know you want to run for office, the better. Six months to a year is good lead time. Ideally, you should have your campaign team in place about six months before the election.

Identifying the right people to fill key positions on your campaign team may be the most critical element of your success. You need people who are committed, dedicated, hard working, and able to volunteer a great deal of time during the campaign period. Candidates who are sought out by a particular party and asked to run may find there is a campaign team already available. In some campaigns, party workers from other provinces are brought in to assist local constituencies.

Try to get individuals from various groups and organizations to work on your team to ensure that you have broad representation within your constituency. Don't just stick to your neighbours. Diversify your team to enhance your support base and improve your understanding of the various perspectives on issues.

The following are some positions and responsibilities you should consider when mounting an effective campaign. Of course, the number of individuals filling these positions will vary depending on the size of your campaign and the level of government for which you are seeking office. The more people you have to work for you, the more you can get done and the less work each individual must assume. Expanding your team will also lessen the chances of having

one individual claim they can do everything, which can jeopardize your campaign.

Official Agent

At the provincial and federal levels you must name an official agent when you register your name as a candidate. This person is responsible for keeping track of expenses and contributions, and for submitting the records to the Chief Electoral Officer at the appropriate time. Choose someone who is well organized with a bookkeeping or accounting background.

Campaign Manager

Oversees all the other individuals on the campaign team and ensures that the course of the campaign runs as smoothly as possible. This individual directs the candidate's daily activities and should be someone with some political experience. Be sure to choose someone you respect and get along with, someone who can give you both praise and criticism, someone with good organizational and people skills.

Finance Chairperson

Responsible for the bookkeeping and, depending on the size of your campaign, may conduct fund-raising. This person should have connections to the business community and should be meticulous in keeping records.

Personnel/Visitation Chairperson

Finds people to canvass households in the polling district and distribute campaign materials. Also locates vehicles and drivers for election day.

Poll Chairperson

Responsible for finding a poll captain for each electoral or polling district, as well as the scrutineers for polling day.

Publicity/Advertising Chairperson

Arranges for appointments for media interviews and prepares news releases in conjunction with the candidate, campaign manager, and researcher. Also schedules and designs all advertising for newspapers, radio, and television.

Signs Chairperson

Supervises the ordering and installation of posters, lawn signs, billboards, etc., and organizes the clean-up crew to remove campaign material (required within a certain time period) after the election.

Researcher/Information Officer

Locates material necessary to inform the candidate about particular issues and may help to write background material for speeches, public forums and debates, news releases, pamphlets, etc., and also keeps an eye on newspaper stories relative to the campaign and issues.

Election Day Chairperson

Organizes the scrutineers' schedules on election day, organizes drivers and day care for voters who need them, posts polling results in the campaign headquarters as they become available, and organizes the post-election-day party for the evening of polling day.

Every party has campaign team guidebooks for candidates, which will vary from the above and provide more detail about what is involved in each campaign team position. Not all are required and some functions are handled by the same person – it depends on what works for you in your area and in your circumstances. Volunteers are increasingly difficult to find for political campaigns, and, in some cases, workers are paid a stipend or salary for their contribution. Whether or not you can afford to pay your workers will depend on the health of your campaign finances.

Canvassing

The most important activity for any candidate in any election at any level is the door-to-door canvass. The one-on-one connection to the voter is critical to lend the personal touch to your platform and views. While many constituencies/ridings are very large geographically, if you are nominated early enough, you should make every effort to visit each household at least once. A second visit is desirable, particularly in areas where there are large numbers of undecided voters. You will need a team of well-spoken representatives to join you for the canvass, and you should never go door-to-door alone. The team you choose will be representing you and your views. Make sure they are familiar with your platform and that you are comfortable with them speaking on your behalf. Don't canvass early in the morning, after 9 pm, or at mealtimes – you don't want to irritate the voters whose support you are seeking.

The whole purpose of the canvass is to share your views and allow constituents to ask questions about your plans for the community and your stand on various issues. Take pamphlets with you that summarize who you are and where you stand. If no one is home, leave literature in the mailbox or on the door latch. Keep a written record of homes you visit and whether they will support you or your opponent, or remain undecided. The door-to-door canvass is also your opportunity to ask if the voter will display a lawn sign on your behalf.

Knowing Your Opponents

It is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of your opponents and to be aware of their positions on the concerns of voters, particularly where they differ and where they agree with your beliefs and values. There may be few ideological differences between candidates, especially in cases of party nomination, when it is even more important to clearly formulate for the party membership what it is that makes you a different and viable choice.

Gather information about other candidates from media reports, public meetings, and materials published by candidates. Make sure a member of your campaign team or a supporter is able to attend each public event, ask questions, and report back to you or your campaign manager about what the other candidates have to say.

Do not go to any public meetings or debates without as many supporters as you can muster. Their role is two-fold: to ask difficult and challenging questions of your competition and to ask you questions that give you an opportunity to outline your views.

As a Candidate You Will Be News

Next to the door-to-door canvass and understanding the views of your opponents, it is critical that you appreciate that as a candidate you will be news. As soon as you announce your candidacy, the media and the public will want to know what you have to say about the issues central to the campaign. You must be prepared in advance of your announcement to respond to any manner of question concerning the local issues, your party's platform, and the broader issues facing the community, province, or country. Make sure you are comfortable responding to the issues before you announce your

candidacy. Once again, a trusted mentor, someone with experience in politics, can be a good sounding board and provide feedback on how you respond under pressure.

As you are about to announce your candidacy, prepare a biography that outlines your background, career history, general goals, and any personal information (family) you wish to share. A standard resumé is also important to have on hand. These are items that you can give to the media or members of the public looking to learn more about you and your views. It will also eliminate the need for you to repeat your story over and over again and risk leaving out important factors about your qualifications.

If the media or a member asks you a question you find objectionable or too personal, do not feel obligated to answer it. Simply tell them the question is off limits. If you are asked questions about issues and you don't have an answer, say so. Don't try to pretend you know the facts when you don't. Most reporters and voters will respect a candidate who is honest and up front about what they do and do not know. Make a commitment to find the answer and get back to them at a later time. Then do the research and get back to them as promised. Do not make promises to the media or the public you are not prepared to keep.

The Media

The relationship between the media and the candidate is an interdependent one. The media cannot do a story without a candidate and the candidate cannot get her message out without the media. While there is widespread mistrust of the media, as a candidate it is important to develop positive and professional relationships with all members of the media to ensure that your position on the issues is articulated fairly and accurately throughout the campaign.

Updated media lists are maintained by each party before an election with names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail. This will include local, provincial, and national media outlets, print, radio, and television. However, it is important to compile your own media list to include reporters, columnists, and commentators that are specific to your constituency/riding so that you can be sure that press releases and other notices get to specific individuals rather than ending up in the general newsroom file where it can be easily overlooked or forgotten. Keep in mind that the party leaders will dominate most of the election coverage locally, provincially, and federally, and you will have to be on good terms with reporters, commentators, and columnists who, along with their editors, will determine what and how much to write about you and your local campaign.

It will become fairly obvious early on which reporters are supportive of you or the issues you focus on. These relationships should be cultivated and maintained in a professional and cordial manner. Always respond to a media request even if you don't intend to grant an interview. It is not only professional, but it could be helpful later on when you want coverage on a particular issue and are having difficulty conveying your message.

Do not assume that the reporter who interviews you or asks you

questions is knowledgeable on the issue or trying to deliberately trip you up. While this may be the case, reporters tend to be generalists and not experts on every issue. They likely have had little time to do research or gather background material in advance of the assignment, so anything you can provide by way of background is helpful and makes the job of getting the story that much easier. This will also allow for a relationship of trust to build, and both reporter and candidate can benefit. It is helpful to know in advance what issue the reporter is calling about. Have your research officer provide you with as much information as possible before you speak to the reporter.

The News Release – The Press Conference

Most of the time the media will be pursuing the candidate for reaction to an issue or event that may have an impact on the campaign. There will, however, be times when the candidate has something to say on an issue and wants coverage. There are two fundamental techniques for this purpose: the news release and the press conference. Neither one of these should be entered into lightly or superficially, and never issue a release or conduct a press conference unless you have something important, new, or highly relevant to say. Overuse of the news release and press conference is the quickest way to dampen media interest in the campaign and tends to reflect poorly on the credibility of the candidate.

Whenever possible press releases should be kept to a one-page maximum, double spaced, with just enough information to pique the interest of reporters. Too much detail in a release may cause the reporter not to bother to contact you for direct comment. Worse still, the release may end up in the newsroom garbage because reporters simply do not have time to read pages and pages of information. (See sample release in Appendix 2.)

A news conference must be reserved for major announcements. This may include the announcement of your candidacy or major developments that have a direct impact on the community. Like too many press releases, too many news conferences tend to erode the credibility of the candidate. When calling a news conference, you are asking reporters to come and listen to what you have to say, to take pictures or video, and to go away with a story fit to print or air. For this reason the news conference must be used sparingly. A press advisory should be sent in advance to let news outlets know when and where the news conference will be held and provide a general idea about its content.

The location of the press conference should take into consideration equipment and space requirements of the media. A microphone that all media can plug into makes their job easier. If you expect television reporters, consider the space requirements for a video camera and tripod. News conferences that can be held outdoors make more interesting visuals for television and lighting does not need to be set up.

At a press conference the candidate should read a brief, clear, and concise statement and then open the floor to questions from the media. If the candidate has other participants in the news conference, their statements should also be kept brief and vetted by the campaign team for accuracy and compatibility. Keep answers brief and to the point. Some reporters may wish to do a more in-depth interview and that should be arranged for after the news conference as a one-on-one session. Again, the rule applies that if you do not know the answer, don't "wing" it. Promise to respond at a later time. Always follow up on phone calls or responses to the media.

Estimating the Cost of Running

Women are more likely than men to experience financial difficulties when running for office. Because women generally have less disposable income, you may have less money available to spend on your campaign, or you may be less able to obtain the large sums crucial to party nomination at the provincial or federal level. In addition, many women carry the added expense of childcare or senior care.

Campaigns can usually be run at the municipal level on a limited budget with the exception of mayoralty and amalgamated municipality campaigns. It is not usually necessary to rent campaign office space or to pay for staff. There are no party campaign funds for candidates and fund-raising is left almost entirely up to the individual and her campaign team. Also, municipal campaign donations are not tax-deductible as they are provincially and federally, which can be an impediment to contributors.

Provincial and federal elections can be very expensive and, necessarily, must include an organization and management strategy that calls for greater spending. If you have already been nominated to represent a particular party in an election, you will have the financial and resource backing of your party organization. The amounts available will depend on the party and the riding, since they are usually funds that have been raised by the local party association. Make sure you are clear at the outset what your personal financial responsibility will be.

One of the best ways to determine how much money you need to run a successful campaign is to look at the returns for the last election at the level of government that interests you. Included in these returns are lists of candidates' expenses broken down into such broad categories as personal expenses, office rental, travelling expenses, goods supplied, advertising, and so forth. Check your specific riding. Although expenses will vary from riding to riding, party to party, and individual to individual, you will get a general sense of how much it will cost to be competitive.

On the following page is a worksheet where you can estimate the amount of money it would take to run a campaign in your area at the appropriate level of government. You will need to determine which expenses are necessary, which would be beneficial if you have enough money, and which are superfluous to your campaign. Obtain realistic estimates – don't guess. Call (or have the appropriate member of your campaign team call) the photographer, the printer, the newspaper, the stationer, phone company, and so on, for current prices.

In federal and provincial elections, candidates who secure more than 15 per cent of the votes in their polling district are reimbursed a certain amount (based on the number of people in the riding and the number of candidates who receive more than 15 per cent of the votes) from public funds, such as the Provincial Consolidated Fund. This is called an election rebate from the provincial or federal government. In order to approximate this amount, find your riding in the "election expenses of candidates" section in the returns for the latest election. If you are eligible for a $20,000-reimbursement, but you only spent $10,000 on your campaign, you will receive only what you actually spent. Do not count on this money until after you have received more than 15 per cent of the vote – there are many disappointed candidates who are ineligible for the rebate, particularly in elections with many candidates.

Table 2 Worksheet

Estimating Your Campaign Budget for a Small Municipal Campaign

	Number & Size	Cost Estimate	Total
Professional photo of candidate			
Posters			
Lawn signs			
Newspaper ads			
Candidate information flyer #1 (biography and platform)			
Postage (# households X cost of postage)			
Caregiving responsibilities			

Table 2 Worksheet

Estimating Your Campaign Budget for a Larger Municipal Campaign

	Number & Size	Cost Estimate	Total
Professional photo of candidate			
Posters			
Lawn signs			
Newspaper ads			
Candidate information flyer #1 (biography and platform)			
Postage (# households X cost of postage)			
Caregiving responsibilities			
News conference			
Candidate information flyer #2 (polling info, transportation, assistance with caregiving responsibilities)			
Postage			
Thank-you advertisements			

Table 2 Worksheet

Estimating Your Campaign Budget for a Provincial or Federal Campaign

	Number & Size	Cost Estimate	Total
Professional photo of candidate			
Posters			
Lawn signs			
Newspaper ads			
Candidate information flyer #1 (biography and platform)			
Postage (# households X cost of postage)			
Caregiving responsibilities			
News conference			
Candidate information flyer #2 (polling info, transportation, assistance with caregiving responsibilities)			

	Number & Size	Cost Estimate	Total
Postage			
Thank-you advertisements			
Headquarters rental			
Office furniture rental			
Heat and electricity			
Telephone, Internet			
Cell phones, pagers			
Office supplies and equipment			
Office staff			
Travel expenses			
Refreshments for public events			
Victory and thank-you party			

Identifying Funding Sources and Fund-Raising

Candidates have three sources of funds: party contributions, private and corporate contributions, and their own personal money. If you are the party's nominated candidate, you will have the support and the experience of the party organization and its fund-raising committee, as well as access to funds that may have accumulated since the last election.

Depending on the level of government and the party organization, different methods of fund-raising may be traditional in your area. Yard sales, auctions, bake sales, car washes, and dinners all remain effective ways of raising money. In these cases, the money does not necessarily come from people who support you as a candidate. People pay for a service or an item, and you get the money for your campaign.

Other fund-raising strategies depend to a larger extent on direct solicitation, either from individuals or from business. These activities should never be undertaken directly by the candidate, but by her team, as it leaves room for abuse and conflict of interest. Your flyers and other campaign material may include a request for donations and the address where cheques may be sent.* Your fund-raising chairperson should identify businesses in your community that may be interested in making a donation to your campaign. Prepare a letter that introduces you and your platform and requests a

**Donations to federal and provincial candidates qualify the donor for an income tax break; donations to municipal candidates do not.*

donation. A week or two after the letters are sent out, have someone make a follow-up phone call to encourage those who are supportive but may be procrastinating over signing a cheque. Individuals who publicly support your campaign should also be asked directly for financial contributions. Receipts must be issued and donors and amounts recorded for all donations.

Make sure that all donors know their money is accepted with no strings attached and will be publicly disclosed. Larger businesses or corporations may donate money to political campaigns because they feel a particular candidate or party has something to offer them, whether or not it is formally stated. They are also likely to be the largest donors, so running a campaign without corporate or organizational funds may put you at a disadvantage if you are competing with others who have access to such funding.

In some provinces it is illegal to accept campaign funds from corporate sponsors, but this is not the case in Nova Scotia. Also, some businesses regularly donate money to all candidates/parties whom they feel have a chance of winning, thereby achieving a tax write-off and political support regardless of the election outcome. You may want to look into this before accepting corporate donations.

Often male candidates have greater access to funds since they are given greater corporate support in the political arena and, traditionally, they have more access to the business network. Although the federal Election Expenses Act controls spending for candidates and parties, those vying for nomination at the constituency level and contenders for party office and leadership are not covered by the same rules that govern general election expenses. This means that there are no real spending limits for party nomination and leadership campaigns unless imposed by the parties themselves.

Always keep in mind that many donations to your campaign can be equally useful in forms other than money – a rent reduction, office supplies, loan of furniture, volunteer help, food. These types of donations can often be easier to solicit than cash.

Every Best Wish ...

We firmly believe that many, many women in Nova Scotia have much to offer in public life. Whether it is skill, ability, education, life experience, or commitment, women are needed to balance our goals and aspirations. While we recognize there are many obstacles, barriers, and challenges to this career choice, we believe that only the full and equal participation of women in political life will bring about that which is so necessary to equality in our society. It is our hope that you will consider public service as yet another contribution you can make to your home, community, and province.

Appendix 1
Party Funds and Financial Matters for Women

As a result of lobbying, primarily by women within the parties, the three major parties have set up special funds for women candidates at the federal and provincial level.

All the parties that provide funds for women, both federally and provincially, provide the money to female candidates with no strings attached. The money can be used for whatever purpose the candidate and campaign team deem necessary.

For information on provincial and federal party funds for women in Nova Scotia, contact

The Liberal Party of Nova Scotia
Suite 304, 1660 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3
Phone (902) 429-1993
Fax (902) 423-1624
E-mail office@liberal.ns.ca
Website www.liberal.ns.ca

Ask about the Cecilia MacDonald Fund (provincial)
and the Judy LaMarsh Fund (federal)

The New Democratic Party of Nova Scotia

Suite 1006, 1660 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1V7
Phone (902) 423-9217
Fax (902) 423-9618
Toll Free 1-800-753-7696
E-mail ndpadmin@nsndp.ca
Website www.ns.ndp.ca

Ask about the Women in the Legislature Fund (provincial)
and the Agnes MacPhail Fund (federal)

The Progressive Conservative Party of Nova Scotia

801–1660 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1V7
Phone (902) 429-9470
Fax (902) 423-2465
Toll Free 1-800-595-TORY (8679)
E-mail info@pcparty.ns.ca
Website www.pcparty.ns.ca

Ask about the Gladys Porter Fund (provincial)
and the Ellen Fairclough Fund (federal)

FOR INFORMATION ON PROVINCIAL REMUNERATION FOR MLAS, CONTACT

The Speaker's Office

PO Box 1617
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y3
Phone (902) 424-5707

For information on disclosure and conflict of interest, contact

Conflict of Interest Commissioner
PO Box 1617
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y3
Phone (902) 424-5978

For information on provincial agencies, boards, and commissions, contact

Ann T. Broughm
ABC Administrator
Nova Scotia Executive Council Office
One Government Place
PO Box 2125
Halifax, NS B3J 3B7
Phone (902) 424-5152
Fax (902) 424-0667

For information on MLA pensions, contact

Nova Scotia Department of Finance
Pension Services
PO Box 187
Halifax, NS B3J 2N3
Phone (902) 424-5070

For information on school boards, contact

The Nova Scotia School Boards Association
95 Victoria Road
Dartmouth, NS V3A 1V2
Phone (902) 491-2888
Fax (902) 429-7405
Website www.nssba.ednet.ns.ca

For information on municipal remuneration for councillors, mayors, and wardens, contact

Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
1106–1809 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8
Phone (902) 423-8331
Fax (902) 425-5592
E-mail mainunsm@eastlink.ca
Website www.unsm.ca

For information on federal boards, commissions, or agencies, contact your local MP or Senator

Senate of Canada
Toll Free 1-800-267-7362

Appendix 2
Sample Press Release

News Release

Smith Announces Run for Party Nomination

February 4, 2008 Antigonish

Jane Smith, 23-year resident of Antigonish, has today announced her intention to seek the _____ Party nomination for the provincial constituency of Antigonish.

In announcing her bid today, Ms Smith said, "The people of Antigonish have given me a lot over the years and I want to give back in a way that will make a difference by representing them in the Nova Scotia Legislature."

Smith is a teacher at Antigonish High School and has spent many years volunteering at the local women's centre, as a volunteer fire fighter, and as a United Way fund-raiser. This is her first bid for provincial office.

"Politics interests me because change interests me, and I think the people of Antigonish want change in representation and in the way politics is done," she said. "I believe, with my experience and skills, I have a valuable contribution to make," she added.

Her primary concerns are the education system, health care, and employment in the Antigonish area.

A native Nova Scotian, Jane Smith moved to Antigonish in 1981 to begin her career as a teacher. She is a single parent who is raising two children: Jason, 17, and Melissa, 15.

For more information, or Ms Smith's biography and resumé, contact the Committee to Elect Jane Smith at _____.

– 30 –

Contact:
(name of person handling media enquiries)
(name of party
(phone number)
(e-mail address)

Appendix 3
Suggested Web Resources

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women

http://women.gov.ns.ca

Follow the link from <Women in Leadership> for up-to-date statistical information on the political participation of women in Nova Scotia and throughout Canada. The website will be updated regularly and will also be linked to other websites that provide information and statistics on women's representation in politics.

Canadian Women Voters Congress

www.canadianwomenvoterscongress.org/

A non-partisan, grass roots organization, dedicated to encouraging all Canadian women to become strong, effective voices at all levels of government.

Elections Canada Online

www.elections.ca/

The non-partisan agency responsible for conducting federal elections and referendums in Canada. This site has a searchable map of electoral boundaries for federal ridings, links to federal election law and legislation, such as the Canada Elections Act, and other information about the electoral process in Canada.

Inter-Parliamentary Union's Women in Politics pages

www.ipu.org/iss-e/women.htm

This international organization is striving to encourage the political participation of women as elected representatives, on an international basis, by raising awareness of issues, barriers women face in running for elected office, etc. Site contains international statistics about women's representation in parliaments around the world.

Municipal Websites

You can connect to numerous municipal websites from Munisource, a Nova Scotia based site.

www.munisource.org/

Individual municipal websites vary, but often you will find such things as council minutes, information on local committees, municipal electoral districts, and municipal elections.

National Women's Liberal Commission

www.nwlc-clfn.ca/default_e.aspx

The mandate of the NWLC is to represent and promote the interests of women within the Liberal Party of Canada and to encourage the active participation of women at all levels of the party. The NWLC strives to ensure that federal policies and legislation do not discriminate against women.

Nova Scotia Elections Act

www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/election.htm

Nova Scotia Chief Electoral Officer/Elections Office

http://electionsnovascotia.ns.ca

Information on Election Returns, statistics on Nova Scotia elections, current and historical, and links to other electoral offices in Canada.

Equal Voice: an Action Group for the Election of Women

www.equalvoice.ca/who.html

This Canadian group describes itself as "a multi-partisan non-profit organization devoted to the still-bold idea that more women must be elected to every level of government in Canada." Now there is a Nova Scotia chapter

National Library of Canada: Celebrating Women's Achievements: First Women in Provincial and Territorial Legislatures

www.nlc-bnc.ca/women/h12-278-e.html

Federal Parliament website, Library of Parliament: Women – Federal Political Representation

www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/compilations/parliament/womenRepresentation.aspx

Provides current statistics on women in federal politics.

www.sfu.ca/~aheard/elections/

A collection of material posted by Andrew Heard, a professor in Simon Fraser University's Political Science Department

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

www.idea.int/gender/

International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. The representation of women and other under-represented groups is a key concern. On the website, go to the Area of Expertise and then Democracy and Gender.

Engender

www.engender.org.uk/scotparl/index.html

When Scotland's Parliament was devolved in 1997, extensive research was done on the representation of women in parliaments in Europe and around the world. Today, the organization continues to monitor women's participation in government and leadership roles. Look for the link Power and Participation.

Still Counting

http://stillcounting.athabascau.ca/

An account of the number of women elected to Canada's legislatures, based on a book.

Appendix 4
Reading List

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Appendix 5
Chronology of Political Gains and Achievements

1758 The Nova Scotia Legislature was formed.

1884 The federal government introduced the Married Women's Property Act recognizing the rights of married women to hold property.

1887 The municipal franchise was granted to widows and spinsters in Nova Scotia.

1893 A bill for the full enfranchisement of women was defeated in Nova Scotia.

1894 Once again, a bill for equal franchise was defeated – by one vote.

1895 A bill for partial franchise for women was defeated by nine votes.

1917 Nurses, under the Military Voters Act, were given the federal vote.

Premier Murray killed the provincial Suffrage Bill, saying, "the enhancement of such a measure at the present time would serve no useful purpose."

Women were granted eligibility for appointment to school boards in incorporated towns.

The Barristers and Solicitors Act was passed, permitting women to study and practice law on the same terms as men.

1918 Most women were granted the right to vote in federal elections across Canada. Most Nova Scotian women were permitted participation in the provincial elections; Asian and Native women were denied suffrage until 1948 and 1960 respectively.

1920 For the first time, women in Nova Scotia (there were three of them) ran for political office – unsuccessfully.

1921 The first female Canadian Member of Parliament was Agnes Macphail. She won the United Farmers of Ontario federal nomination over 10 men.

Women could be elected to legislative offices federally and in most provinces.

1928 Following the petition for Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby, and Henrietta Muir Edwards, the Supreme Court of Canada decided that women were not persons under the terms of the British North America Act, and therefore could not be appointed to the Senate.

1929 After the famous "Person's Case" was heard before the British Privy Council (at that time the court of appeal for the Supreme Court of Canada), Canadian women were granted full political freedom.

1930 Cairine Wilson, from Ontario, became the first woman appointed to the Senate.

1935 It was not for another 14 years that a second woman, Martha Black, was elected to Parliament.

1957 Ellen Fairclough became the first woman to be appointed to a federal Cabinet position, when she became Secretary of State.

1960 Progressive Conservative Gladys Porter, a former Mayor of Kentville, became the first Nova Scotian woman elected at the provincial level.

1962 Chief Mary Ellen Pierro was the first woman to be elected chief in Nova Scotia at Wagmatcook First Nation in Cape Breton.

1969 Rachel Marshall of Millbrook was the first woman to be a band chief on a Canadian Indian Reserve.

1970 The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada was tabled.

1971 Canada Labour Code Amendments included protection from discrimination based on sex and martial status.

1974 Liberal Coline Campbell became the first woman to hold a Nova Scotia seat in Parliament.

Liberal Melinda MacLean was the second Nova Scotia woman elected at the provincial level.

1980 New Democrat Alexa McDonough became Canada's first female party leader.

1983 PC Maxine Cochran was elected. This by-election marked the first time two women held seats at the same time in Nova Scotia.

1984 This year was a breakthrough for women at the federal level. At this time, 27 women sat in the House of Commons, the highest number in history. Six of them were appointed to Cabinet.

For the first time in a western democracy, federal leaders of the three parties agreed to participate in a televised debate on issues of concern to women.

Jeanne Sauve became the first woman Governor General of Canada.

PC Corta Etter was elected at the provincial level.

Daurene Lewis of Annapolis Royal became Canada's first Black woman mayor.

1988 PC Marie Dechman and Liberal Sandy Jolly were successful in securing provincial seats.

Liberal Mary Clancy was elected in a federal riding.

Ethel Blondin-Andrew is the first Aboriginal woman elected to the House of Commons.

1989 Marie Dechman became the first woman Deputy Speaker of the House.

Audrey McLaughlin became leader of the Federal NDP party – the first woman to lead a national political party in Canada.

1991 After the Nova Scotia Municipal Elections in the fall of 1991, more than half of Nova Scotia municipalities had female mayors, including Moira Ducharme, Halifax's first woman mayor.

Rita Johnston became Leader of British Columbia's Social Credit Party and the first female provincial premier of Canada.

1993 Five women were elected to sit in the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly. This was a record for Nova Scotia politics, but in spite of that, Nova Scotia was still second to last in the country in terms of female representation in the provincial government.

Kim Campbell became the first woman Prime Minister of Canada Catherine Callbeck of Prince Edward Island was the first elected woman provincial premier of Canada.

Jean Augustine was elected to Parliament, representing the Etobicoke-Lakeshore (Ont.) Riding. She became the first African Canadian woman to sit in Canada's House of Commons. In 2002 she was appointed to Cabinet as Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

1998 NDP Yvonne Atwell was the first African Nova Scotian woman elected to the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly.

1999 A record number of female candidates ran in the Nova Scotia provincial election: 47 women ran for office, but again only 5 were elected to the Legislative Assembly.

2000 Helen MacDonald was elected leader of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party.

2003 House of Commons has 63 women, which is about 20 per cent of the total of 301 seats in the Commons.

Thirty-six female candidates ran in the Nova Scotia provincial election; 6 were elected to the Legislative Assembly.

2006 The number of women in the house of Commons edges up to 65 (21.1 per cent).

The provincial election has a record 49 women running. Nine win seats – 17.3 per cent of the 52 seats.

2007 A by-election brought the number of women in the Nova Scotia legislature to 10 – 19.2 per cent of the 52 seats.

Nova Scotia
Advisory Council on
the Status of Women

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women
6169 Quinpool Road, Suite 202
PO Box 745
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T3

Phone: (902) 424-8662 or
1-800-565-8662 (toll free within Nova Scotia)
Fax: (902) 424-0573

women@gov.ns.ca
http://women.gov.ns.ca/